

## Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

OMB-01 /078 W

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P R 110935Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3749

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL UDORN

DIA

CDR USSAG NKP

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, LA

SUBJECT: CONSTITUTION DAY CEREMONY IN VIENTIANE

1. RESTRAINED CONSTITUTION DAY CEREMONIES WERE HELD IN VIENTIANE MORNING MAY 11. PRINCIPAL QUESTIONS WERE WHO WOULD ATTEND AND WHAT PRIME MINISTER WOULD SAY. PARADE HAD BEEN CANCELLED, SO FORMAL PROGRAM WAS OTHERWISE REDUCED TO KING'S ARRIVAL, REVIEW OF TROOPS (TWO COMPANIES OF FAR AND ONE OF PATHET LAO), SOUVANNA'S SPEECH AND KING'S PRESENTATION OF DECORATIONS.

2. VIENTIANE SIDE AND FAR RANKS WERE VERY THIN INDEED. ONLY VIENTIANE SIDE CABINET MEMBERS WERE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER LEAUM AND SECRETARIES OF STATE OUDAY SOUVANNAVONG (INFORMATION), TOUBY LYFOUNG (PTT) AND SOUKAN VILAYSARN (RELIGION). MINISTER OF JUSTICE KHAMHING SOUVANLASY,  
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TECHNICALLY A "QUALIFIED NEUTRALISTS" BUT WITH USUALLY

VIENTIANE SIDE LEANINGS, WAS ALSO PRESENT. CABINET RANKS FURTHER REDUCED BECAUSE NONE OF THE SIX MINISTERS AND SECRETARIES OF STATE (DEFENSE, INTERIOR AND ECONOMY) WHO WENT TO PAKSE MORNING MAY 8 HAD YET RETURNED. (MINDEF SISOUK OF COURSE HAS RESIGNED AND LEFT COUNTRY.) ONLY SENIOR FAR GENERALS WERE BOUNPONE (C-IN-C), BOUATHONG (AIR FORCE) AND ETAM (PSYWAR).

3. SOUVANNA'S SPEECH WAS GENERAL AND IN MOST RESPECTS UPBEAT, WITH CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS ON IMPORTANCE OF CONSTITUTION AND ITS DURABILITY SINCE 1947. HE CITED KING'S RECENT VISIT TO SAM NEUA AND RECEPTION THERE AS AN HISTORIC EVENT, MORE ELOQUENT THAN ALL THE SPEECHES GIVEN DURING THE VISIT ITSELF. THE SENTENCE WHICH DREW MOST ATTENTION, AND WHICH WE BELIEVE REPRESENTS SOUVANNA'S ATTITUDE IN FACE OF PRESENT SITUATION, WAS AS FOLLOWS: "...NOW THAT THE JOLTS WHICH HAVE AGITATED OUR COUNTRY FOR THE LAST TWENTY HEARS HAVE MADE IT CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT A NEW SITUATION HAS APPEARED AND THAT THAT SITUATION HAS IMPOSED ITSELF BY THE VERY FORCE OF ITS DYNAMISM, IT IS NECESSARY TO YIELD TO THE EVIDENCE AND TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE IN ACCORD WITH HISTORY."

4. SOUVANNA MADE NO RPT NO DIRECT REFERENCE TO VOLUNTARY OR FORCED RESIGNATIONS OF CABINET OFFICIALS AND FAR GENERALS IN RECENT DAYS. SOME OF THESE HAD BEEN MADE PUBLIC IN THE ANNOUNCEMENT ISSUED BY SOUVANNA'S OFFICE LATE ON MAY 10 WHICH DESCRIBED SOME OF THE REMOVALS OF FAR GENERALS AS "TRANSFERS". (FBIS BANGKOK 101235Z MAY 75).

CHAPMAN

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## Message Attributes

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